THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) No. Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

South-Asian train service

3353. SHRI JABIR HUSAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railway Ministry of Pakistan has technically approved an Indian proposal to launch South-Asian train service linking Bangladesh, India and Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether Pakistan Government has conveyed their approval for further evaluation;

(c) if so, whether all the Governments have given their approval;

(d) if so, whether her Ministry's proposal of Dhaka- Delhi- Lahore train is viable in all respects;

(e) whether services could be extended to Karachi or Islamabad if need arises; and

(f) if so, by when final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (f) At the third meeting of SAARC Inter-Governmental Group on Transport held on 24th July 2009 at Colombo, India circulated a Concept Paper on running of a demonstration container train from Bangladesh to Pakistan *via* India and Nepal. The possible corridor for running the demonstration train mentioned in the Paper was Chittagong Port/Dhaka (Bangladesh)-Katihar (India)- Birgunj (Nepal) - Lahore (Pakistan). The meeting noted the proposal and the Member States were to consider this proposal and offer their comments within three months.

This position was approved in the second meeting of SAARC Transport Ministers held on the next day *i.e.* 25th July 2009. All the Member States, including Pakistan and Bangladesh have agreed to evaluate the Concept Paper circulated by India. However, comments from the Member States have not been received. Any further decision on the proposal including extension to other points can be taken only after the Concept Paper is first discussed and agreed among the member countries.

Plan for mobilization of financial resources

3354. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to put in use the surplus railway land to raise additional financial resources;

(b) if so, whether there is any policy firmed up to that end;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, without a policy how can her Ministry goes for such utilization;